United Nations

Daily Highlights

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FRIDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Security Council, in Presidential statement, welcomes Arusha Peace Agreement concluded by Government of Rwanda and Rwandese Patriotic Front on 4 August and Secretary-General's decision to send mission to that country.

+ Secretary-General urges world community to support agreement on mutual recognition reached by Israel and PLO; says United Nations is ready to help parties implement peace process.

+ Secretary-General deplores attack on UNOSOM II peace-keepers in Mogadishu yesterday; says that when women and children are used as human shields, responsibility for civilian casualties lies with those who carry out attacks.

+ Special Committee against Apartheid says agreement reached in South Africa's multi-party negotiations on creation of Transitional Executive Council is historic milestone in democratization of country.

+ Secretary-General, in meeting with Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic, stresses that negotiations on former Yugoslavia should resume as soon as possible.

+ Final report of United States Commission on improving effectiveness of United Nations issued today; Secretary-General welcomes "thoughtful and thought-provoking analysis".

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The Security Council today welcomed the Peace Agreement concluded by the Government of Rwanda and the Rwandese Patriotic Front (RPF) at Arusha on 4 August. In a statement read out by its President, Adolfo Raul Taylhardat (Venezuela), the Council said it was aware that the parties hoped for international assistance in implementing the Agreement, and took note of the importance they had attached to today, as the date for the establishment of transitional institutions.

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The Council welcomed the Secretary-General's decision to send a reconnaissance mission to Rwanda, and said it hoped to have his report based on the mission's recommendations in the next few days, in order to consider how the United Nations could help facilitate implementation of the Agreement.

The Council urged the Rwandese Government and the RPF to continue to honour the Arusha Agreement in accordance with their commitments. It also urged the parties to continue to cooperate with the Neutral Military Observer Group, whose mandate the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) had decided to extend on an interim basis.

Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali today warmly welcomed the agreement on mutual recognition reached by the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), according to a United Nations spokesman. The Secretary-General urged the world community to give its wholehearted support to the agreement, saying that the conflict which had preceded it had caused the most serious concern with regard to the maintenance of international peace and security.

The Secretary-General said the United Nations was ready to assist the parties as they worked towards a just and lasting peace in the Middle East.

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United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM II) forces were attacked in Mogadishu yesterday for the second time in a week. One Pakistani peace-keeper was killed and two were wounded in the exchange of fire that followed the attack. Two American soldiers were also injured. A United Nations spokesman said it had been impossible to ascertain the number of Somali casualties.

Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali today deplored the incident, and said all indications pointed to the attack being pre-meditated and highly coordinated, involving well over a hundred militiamen who used women and children as human shields. Under those circumstances, responsibility for civilian casualties lay with those who carried out the attack, he stressed.

The Secretary-General again emphasized the importance of a secure environment for UNOSOM II's essential humanitarian and political work. He underlined that the process of disarmament of all Somali factions would continue, despite the difficulties.

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The Special Committee against Apartheid today welcomed the "milestone" agreement reached this week in South Africa's multi-party negotiations allowing for the establishment of a Transitional Executive Council. Committee Chairman Ibrahim Gambari (Nigeria) said the agreement was the first step in the transformation of South Africa into a new democratic society. For the first time, a non-racial body would share in governmental decision-making before the country's first "one person, one vote" elections.

(more)

The Chairman said this week's success was testimony to the spirit of compromise and broad agreement that had taken root in the multi-party talks. He applauded the persistence of the negotiators and appealed to the political leaders who had suspended their parties' participation in the talks to return to them.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali met yesterday with President Alija Izetbegovic of Bosnia and Herzegovina and stressed that negotiations on the former Yugoslavia should resume as soon as possible, according to a United Nations spokesman. Peace talks in Geneva broke down last week because the parties could not agree on the territorial division of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The Secretary-General explained to President Izetbegovic the procedure for first use of air power in support of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR), and mentioned an exercise that had taken place to test the authorization procedure, the spokesman said. Mr. Boutros-Ghali would brief Special Representative Thorvald Stoltenberg on his meeting with President Izetbegovic, as part of continuing consultations between New York and Zagreb.

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The final report of the United States Commission on improving the effectiveness of the United Nations was issued today. Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali welcomed the report, entitled "Defining Purpose: The United Nations and the Health of Nations", and said it presented a thoughtful and thought-provoking analysis of the United Nations and an evaluation of the role of the United States in the Organization.

He said the Secretariat commended the work of the 16-member Commission, in particular that of its Co-Chairman, Representative James A. Leach, whose efforts led to the creation of the Commission. Mr. Leach's introduction, he said, reflected a view of the potential of the United Nations to become a truly effective instrument for the multilateral diplomacy necessary to meet global challenges.

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